



ABERDEEN
CITY COUNCIL

EQUAL PAY

POLICY & STATEMENT

Approved by the Staff Governance Committee on xxx

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SECTION 1: EQUAL PAY POLICY

The Council is committed to the principle of equal pay for all employees. It aims to eliminate any bias in its pay systems, understanding that equal pay is a legal right under domestic law.

It is in the interest of the Council to ensure fair and just pay systems. It is important that employees have confidence in the process of eliminating bias. In this respect the Council is committed to working with recognised trades unions to ensure the provision of equal pay.

The Council believes that in eliminating any unlawful bias in its pay system it is sending a positive message to both staff and customers. It makes good business sense to have a fair, transparent reward system and it helps to control costs. It is recognised that avoiding unfair discrimination will improve morale and enhance efficiency.

OBJECTIVES ARE TO:

- Eliminate any unfair, unjust or unlawful practices that impact on pay, and
- Take appropriate remedial action.
- Conduct equal pay reviews in line with Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) guidance.
- Plan, develop and implement actions together with recognised trade unions
- Provide training and guidance for those involved in pay assessment
- Inform employees of how pay assessment works in practice and how their own pay is determined
- Monitor pay statistics annually.
- Work with recognised trades unions to deliver equal pay across the workforce we employ.

EQUAL PAY STATEMENT

The Equal Pay Statement provides detail and explanation about how policy objectives will be achieved.

SECTION 2: EQUAL PAY STATEMENT

CONTEXT

The Council employs people across a wide range of services, functions and disciplines. It recognises national collective bargaining for four distinct groups of employees, namely:

- Scottish Joint Council for Local Government Employees (SJC)
- Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (SNCT)
- SJC for Building & Civil Engineering Operatives, Engineering Craftsmen, and Electricians & Plumbers (Craft Operatives)
- Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Officials of Local Authorities (Scotland) (JNC)

In respect of the above four groups there are elements of pay which are subject to local determination and others that are determined nationally. This Equal Pay Statement deals with the issues that the Council can determine locally.

STATEMENT

The Council is committed to addressing any differences between the pay of employees that are related to characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010 and to meeting responsibilities for equal pay. This will be done through the application of a fair and non discriminatory job evaluation scheme and the adoption of fair and transparent terms and conditions of service. This does not apply to Chief Officers who have separate arrangements.

For Craft Operatives and Teachers, pay is determined by the nationally negotiated pay award process.

It is recognised that genuine intentions alone are not enough to put equal pay into practice. There is a legal framework which imposes certain obligations on employers to prevent discrimination in the workplace and in service delivery. In addition, equality of opportunity is one of the key principles of the Council.

The Council has in place an equal pay and modernisation programme, which has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment and full consultation, which provides employees with a pay system and a set of terms and conditions that are reflective of a modern organisation.

To meet its public sector equality duties, as prescribed in the Equality Act 2010, Aberdeen City Council has set objectives in key priority areas. Occupational Segregation (where an occupation is dominated by a group that shares a protected characteristic, usually gender) has been identified as one of these key priorities and the Council aims to ensure that all protected characteristics are represented at all levels of the workforce and in all areas of work. Another priority area in the pursuit of eliminating bias is to eradicate any unequal employment practices and promote equality in the workplace. The Council will work in partnership with employees and trade unions to meet and, where possible, exceed its moral and legal obligations.

Causes of the Pay Gap

Developing pay systems that are free from bias is only part of what an employer can do to close the pay gap. The Council strives to be a leading employer in developing and delivering a scheme of terms and conditions which are family friendly and flexible where service requirements permit. The Council has a wide range of flexible working arrangements and we will continue to keep these under review.

- **Occupational Segregation** - In terms of occupational segregation, the Council will continue to monitor the vertical and horizontal issues. In some respects more can be done to seek to break down barriers for employees moving into what have been previously viewed as single gender dominated jobs.

Vertical occupational segregation will continue to be monitored to see if “glass ceilings” can be identified and understand the barriers with a view to removing them.

- **Recruitment Processes** - The Council will continue to ensure all jobs are as widely advertised as possible and that job profiles for use in the selection process realistically reflect the requirements of those jobs. It has developed significant guidance including specific training on recruitment and selection to assist with ensuring recruitment decisions are free from any form of discrimination.

- **Long-Hours Culture** – There is overwhelming evidence that long hours can be harmful to employees’ health and productivity. The concept of “presenteeism” can also be viewed as a barrier for employees looking for promotion or development. The Council supports flexible working arrangements where customer focus and service delivery is not compromised. The emphasis in this area will be on smarter ways of working.
- **Access to Training** – There are comprehensive training and development opportunities for all staff. The Council will seek to ensure that those in part-time or lower paid occupations have the same opportunities to access training in order to develop their skills and behaviours.

Meeting Objectives

The EHRC recommend that specific details are provided to demonstrate how an employer will meet its objectives.

- Equal Pay is specifically identified as part of the Council’s equal pay and modernisation agenda. Regular discussions have been, and continue to be, held with the recognised trade union representatives to ensure that a shared approach is taken to the continued implementation of the agenda.
- For those working in promoted Teaching posts, the nationally determined job sizing toolkit has been adopted and continues to be applied by the Council.
- Full training has been provided for all involved in the operation of the job evaluation schemes.
- An Appeals Procedure arising from job evaluation is proposed as a part of the process
- The Council will monitor and report on gender pay statistics annually.

SECTION 3: REVIEW

REVIEW

The Equal Pay Policy and Statement will be monitored, and reviewed every 3 years. Any changes will be put in place following normal consultation arrangements.